# Examinations Policy

**This policy covers summative written examinations in support of Senate Regulations.**
**Key Principles**

This policy is based on the principle of providing a fair and equitable examination experience for all students, meeting academic requirements, and ensuring practicalities are met as effectively and efficiently as possible. It ensures that all staff and candidates are clear as to their responsibilities regarding examinations, and how to work with and access the services provided.

## Main Policy

### 1    Purpose and Key Objectives

This policy has been developed in consultation with the Learning and Teaching Committee. It is prepared as a guide to the examinations process with transparency against a shared purpose.  It is informed by current practice and has been benchmarked against the wider higher education sector.

It remains a live document, which will need to develop and evolve with teaching and learning practice at Brunel, and as the supporting systems and teams progress.  The context is for us all to work together, as a community, to provide the best possible environment for candidates to succeed and realise their potential within a fair and equitable system.

### 2    Examination Period and Session Times

Examination periods and session times shall be agreed with Senate and in accordance with Senate Regulations (SR 4.9).

Summative Examinations
- Summative examinations which fall outside of these periods shall conform to this policy's standard provision as far as possible, including layout of venues and provision of trained invigilators and technical support.
- The examinations team will endeavour to make suitable venues available, and to maintain a pool of trained invigilators and support staff that can be made available to colleges.

### 3    The Examination Timetable

- It is recognised that the earlier the timetable can be finalised the more beneficial this is for candidates revision planning.
- The examination timetable shall be published ahead of the examination period, in accordance with SR 4.9**.**

- Initially the timetable is scheduled, as far as possible, using only the morning and afternoon sessions. Evening sessions are then used where practicalities prevent use of the earlier times.
- The only constraint applied is to avoid scheduling any candidate with two examinations on the same day, or with an evening examination followed by a morning examination the next day. This may not always be possible, especially during the re-sit period.
- The examinations shall be distributed with consideration given to the spread for candidates and dependent on their level of study.
- The University wants to provide equal opportunity and so implementation of these principles need to take account of extra time allocated to candidates with additional requirements and the practicalities of parallel examinations sat at remote sites, including partner institutions.
- All candidates are normally limited to a maximum of 5 hours of examinations per day.

## 4  Examination Durations

- Examination duration shall be agreed as part of the module (and programme) approval, and this duration shall be inclusive of advised reading time. Students will not be prevented from writing during reading time.
- Normally examinations are to be 60, 120 or 180 minute durations. This is to allow greater flexibility in allocating examinations to venues and to minimise disruption in venues particularly during the re-sit period.

## 5  Venues

- All examination venues shall be fit for purpose and create an environment which allows students to achieve their potential and prevent opportunity for misconduct.
- The examinations team shall provide centrally invigilated rooms for all candidates requiring an adjustment of additional time. Due to the variety of times that need to be accommodated, multiple rooms may be provided to minimise disruption. These rooms should be located near to each other to avoid a significant increase in necessary resources.
- An additional, centrally invigilated, room will be provided for all students who require the use of a University PC, apart from those who require specialist assistive technology
- Candidates who require specialist assistive technology can be roomed in the Assistive Technology Centre in consultation with the Dyslexia and Disability Service (DDS).
- Candidates with other requirements shall be roomed by the examinations team.
- Any venue that fails to meet expectation should be reported to examinations team by candidates or a member of staff.

## 6  Managing Additional Needs

- In accordance with SR 4.19 & 4.20 and with the DDS Support Profile guidance, the University strives to ensure all have equal access and opportunity, and will take necessary measures to make reasonable adjustments for candidates with additional needs. It is recognised there are inevitable practical difficulties in ensuring the best provision for those with specific requirements against the broader needs of the cohort. In particular there can be difficulties resolving issues for given individuals where information is limited and/or received late in the cycle.
- Where examinations are digital, candidates without appropriate equipment will need to follow instructions to inform the examinations team so that adequate provision can be made.

- Candidates who require reasonable adjustments due to a disability or dyslexia should register with the DDS. The Disability or Dyslexia Advisor will complete a support profile document to confirm recommended adjustments to each candidate's college.
- A deadline will be set and advertised ahead of each University examination period, by which time candidates requiring reasonable adjustments must inform the DDS or examinations team. After the deadline has passed, any further reasonable adjustments will be at the discretion of the examinations team or college.
- Candidates, academics and administrators are advised to make contact with the DDS and examinations team where necessary to seek further advice, to enable solutions to be implemented to provide the best outcome for the individual or sub-group and the overall cohort involved.
- Rooms provided for candidates who require additional time will be indicated on the online timetable. Students are encouraged to use the online timetable as it will provide the most up to date information.

## 7    Invigilators/ People in the room

Academics;
- Are required by SR 4.12 to be present for the first half hour of an examination they have written. They may leave after this time but must leave contact details and be readily available.

College Administrators;
- The examinations team shall maintain a list of college contacts for examinations; this should be updated on a regular basis.
- These contacts will work in partnership with the examinations team to help delivery on a number of key administrative activities.

Invigilators;
- For all venues, invigilators will be trained, provided and managed by the examinations team.  These shall be recruited externally where possible to avoid conflicts of interest but at peak times it is realised that we may have to fill positions with research students.
- Invigilators roles will vary depending on venues due to the varying physical nature and how this affects responsibilities.
- Invigilators for examinations scheduled outside the main University examination period should be provided by the college using the pool of trained invigilators managed by the examinations team.

Technical support;
- For all digital examination venues, technical support staff will be available in addition to invigilation staff, and managed by the examinations team. These shall normally be recruited from the student body and will be appropriately trained.

## 8    Secure Materials: Question Papers and Examination Answer books

- All summative University examinations will normally be answered using University answer books or the University's digital assessment platform.  Design of these will be made to ensure sufficient candidate information is obtained, anonymity is preserved and opportunities for misconduct are minimised.
- At the end of an examination invigilators shall ensure collection of all question papers and answer books and, where not required for marking, paperwork will be confidentially destroyed.
- All question papers and digital scripts shall be kept, according to the relevant Record Retention Schedule, in a secure electronic archive following the examination period.

## 9    Rules and Regulations

Candidate Conduct

- Candidates will not be allowed to enter the examination venue after the published start time.
- Candidates are not permitted to leave the venue before the end of their examination. During the first hour and last 30 minutes of an examination, any candidate with an exceptional requirement to leave the venue will be asked to wait.
- SR 6 defines collusion and cheating.
- Candidates are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and honest manner during examinations.
- The Candidate Guide outlines how candidates are to conduct themselves and what is allowed to be brought into the examination venue.

Extenuating circumstances
- Outlined in SR 4.30 – 4.51 and guidance can be found here.
- Extenuating circumstances claims need to be made in accordance with the regulations. Supporting evidence must normally be submitted no later than five working days after the examination.

The examinations team shall report on any such instances as outlined below in records and reports, and where possible provide evidence, to inform the department and where necessary the relevant boards.

## 10   Records and Reports

All records relating to examinations, held by the examinations team shall be retained for 12 months before being confidentially destroyed.

Timetable;
- Shall be finalised and published no less than four weeks ahead of the first examination of the period.

Seating plans;
- Shall be published to department administrators four weeks prior to the first examination of the scheduled period. All updates and amendments must be made within the first week of this publication. Seating plans shall then be considered finalised.

Attendance Register
- Attendance shall be taken, candidate identities checked and reported back to the college in a timely manner.
- Any late arrivals and all departures from the examination room prior to its finish shall be recorded.

Examination Record Sheet (ERS);
- There shall be an ERS record completed for individual modules and in each location for the module, to give basic counts for the examination and a report of any unusual incident or interruption. The record shall be made available to college staff.

Student Observation Sheets (SOS);

- Will be completed by an invigilator or relevant member of staff, when there is a concern over a student's behaviour or well-being and, where appropriate, will provide supporting evidence. The record shall be made available to college staff.
- A summary of SOS forms shall be sent to Colleges and agreed department contacts by the examinations team. The Colleges subsequent follow up actions shall be reported back to the examinations team.

## 11   Health and Safety Issues

- The examinations team and Colleges will work in conjunction with Estates, Operations and the Health and Safety office to ensure room capacities and layouts comply with safety legislation and guidelines.
- Emergency procedures will be agreed with Health and Safety, and where appropriate with Security. Relevant guidance will be given, to invigilators and in turn to candidates, at the start of each main University examination session.

**Appendices**

These appendices are available via Welcome to Examinations:

- Candidate Guide
- Staff Guide -
  Academic and
  Administration
- Invigilator Guide

These appendices are available from TAG (Timetabling and Awarding Group), Examinations team, Examinations@brunel.ac.uk:

- Examination Room Set Up
- Forms - ERS, SOS
- Poster - Notice to Students